



## CONNECTICUT ASSOCIATION OF NUTRITION AND AGING SERVICE PROVIDERS

March 8, 2011

Senator Musto, Representative Tercyak and members of the Human Services committee, I am here today to speak on behalf of Bill # 1120 that allows contributions from tax refunds to benefit Meals on Wheels. Each day in the State of CT over 6,000 meals are delivered to this state's homebound seniors. This vital service provides a basic need that keeps senior residents from being institutionalized and allows them to remain independent in their own home ultimately saving the state of CT money. In addition to helping thousands of seniors maintain their independence Meals on Wheels offers respite and peace of mind to family members and caregivers. Thousands of volunteers help us with this endeavor day in and day out by assisting us with the delivery of these meals to urban, suburban and rural areas of CT.

An optimistic fact is that Meals on Wheels touches many lives both directly and indirectly throughout this state. Even if you are not directly or indirectly benefiting from Meals on Wheels as a recipient, caregiver or volunteer, many people are familiar with our program because we are a visible service in communities and neighborhoods throughout CT.

A more sobering fact is that funding levels are not able to keep up with the growing need for services and the rising costs to provide the service. The need for home delivered meals continues to rise as the elderly population continues to grow. In addition, food and delivery costs are increasing at a pace that funding sources are unable to keep up with. At least one CT program has a waiting list while others are currently over serving and contemplating a waiting list.

This bill allows those who benefit from Meals on Wheels to show their support by directing their tax refund to the program. Whether the donor is a recipient who benefits by receiving a nutritious meal, a caregiver who receives peace of mind that their loved one is eating well and checked on each day or a volunteer who sees first hand how our program benefits seniors both nutritionally and socially, this bill now gives them the opportunity to show their support and appreciation by directing their refund or a portion of it to Meals on Wheels.

Those CT residents who don't currently benefit from Meals on Wheels services but are aging themselves or may have aging friends and family members will also have an opportunity to direct their refund towards a program that they could relate to or they feel, in some way, might be in their future.

Thank you for considering this opportunity that will help Meals on Wheels and ultimately help CT seniors remain independent in their own home.

Respectfully Submitted,

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